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Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 64/293 and 70/179. It summarizes the efforts of Member States and the entities of the United Nations system towards implementing Assembly resolution 70/179, entitled "Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons". It includes information on the status of ratifications or accessions to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, as well as on efforts made by all stakeholders to further enhance the implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/293. The report further provides an update on the status and work of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children; information on the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons* issued by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in 2014 and the report to be launched in 2016; the work of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons; and information on awareness-raising campaigns, in particular, the designated World Day against Trafficking in Persons.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 70/179 on improving coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons, the General Assembly called upon Governments to continue their efforts to combat trafficking in persons, including by addressing the various factors that make people vulnerable to trafficking in persons, increasing prevention efforts and criminalizing trafficking in persons. The Assembly urged Governments, entities of the United Nations system and other organizations to continue to contribute to the full and effective implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/293, including by means of strengthening cooperation and improving coordination among themselves in achieving that goal. The Global Plan of Action called for coordinated and consistent measures to fight trafficking in persons in the areas of prevention of trafficking in persons, protection of and assistance to trafficking victims, prosecution of traffickers, and strengthening of partnerships against trafficking in persons. The Global Plan of Action also created the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, tasked the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with biennial reporting on patterns and flows of trafficking in persons, and strengthened the role of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons.

2. The General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its seventy-first session a report on the implementation of resolution 70/179. The present report is based, inter alia, on information received from Member States and entities of the United Nations system, as well as member agencies of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons. It covers the reporting period since the adoption of the previous resolution 68/192, entitled "Improving coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons", from 18 December 2013 to 1 April 2016.

II. Status of ratification of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol and progress by Member States towards criminalizing all forms of trafficking in persons

3. In its resolution 70/179, the General Assembly urged Member States that have not yet done so to consider ratifying or acceding to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementing Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. In the reporting period, seven States became States parties to the Organized Crime Convention, namely Sierra Leone (12 August 2014), Eritrea (25 September 2014), Tonga (3 October 2014), Barbados (11 November 2014), Samoa (17 December 2014), the State of Palestine (2 January 2015) and the Republic of Korea (5 November 2015). As of 30 May 2016, there were 186 States parties to the Convention. In the reporting period, 10 States have become parties to the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, namely Sierra Leone (12 August 2014), Afghanistan (15 August 2014), Angola (19 September 2014), Eritrea (25 September 2014), Barbados (11 November 2014), Sudan (2 December 2014), the Czech Republic (17 December 2014), Sri Lanka (15 June 2015), Singapore (28 September

2015) and the Republic of Korea (5 November 2015). As of 30 May 2016, there were 169 States parties to the Protocol.

4. Also in resolution 70/179, the General Assembly called upon Member States to continue their efforts to criminalize trafficking in persons in all of its forms, to condemn these practices, and to investigate, prosecute and penalize traffickers and intermediaries. According to the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2014* published by UNODC, as of August 2014, 85 per cent of countries considered in the report criminalized all aspects of trafficking in persons explicitly listed in the Trafficking in Persons Protocol. About 10 per cent had partial legislation. Five per cent of the countries did not have any offence in their legislation that specifically criminalized trafficking in persons. The report also showed that the level of convictions of trafficking in persons globally remained low. Between 2010 and 2012, about 40 per cent of countries covered by the report had less than 10 convictions per year. About 15 per cent of the countries did not report a single conviction.

III. Ensuring the full and effective implementation of the Global Plan of Action

A. Measures reported by Member States, including for prevention and reducing vulnerabilities of people to becoming victims of trafficking in persons

5. As of 30 May 2016, the following States had replied to a request for information circulated by the Secretary-General in the form of a note verbale: Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, France, Germany, Israel, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Malta, Mauritius, Montenegro, Peru, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, United States of America and Viet Nam.

1. Legislation

6. In their replies, several Member States highlighted legislative efforts to bring national laws in line with or even go beyond the requirements of relevant international frameworks, and acknowledged the importance of a robust legal framework in the fight against trafficking in persons. Further, several Member States reported new legislation enacted to address trafficking in organs. Member States also reported legislation empowering authorities to shut down workplaces or suspend operating licenses of private actors, and protect whistle-blowers against civil and criminal litigation.

7. A large number of Member States have developed strategic frameworks or national action plans to strengthen and facilitate national coordination to combat trafficking in persons and to facilitate better exchange of information and good practices.

2. Prevention

8. In resolution 70/179, the General Assembly urged Member States to continue to contribute to the full and effective implementation of the Global Plan of Action. The General Assembly also called upon Member States to increase and support prevention efforts to combat trafficking in persons by focusing on the demand that fosters all forms of trafficking in persons.

9. Many Member States reported that they had put in place measures to combat trafficking in persons, in particular the supply chains in both the public and private sectors, including by ensuring that government procurement practices and regulations did not contribute to trafficking.

10. A large number of Member States reported they had undertaken national awareness-raising campaigns on trafficking in persons. Those campaigns took many different forms such as anti-trafficking-related media contests, seminars, digital messaging platforms, stage shows, theatre productions and television broadcasts, and others joining or utilizing the Blue Heart Campaign against Human Trafficking. Many countries also reported having created different events to mark the World Day against Trafficking in Persons (30 July), through a variety of initiatives including films, light shows and seminars. Many of the activities took place in cooperation with the private sector, civil society and international organizations.

11. Some countries reported having developed or funded awareness-raising and information campaigns with a focus on certain types of trafficking and/or campaigns aimed at specific groups, for example, labour exploitation in general, forced labour in selected industries, forced marriage, domestic sex trafficking of indigenous peoples, migrants and other vulnerable workers, children and parents.

12. A few Member States reported having taken action to counter factors that make people vulnerable to trafficking in persons, including through development programmes.

13. Some Member States reported having put special procedures in place for citizens working overseas, including restricting recruitment fees, introducing licensing requirements, contract registration, and the review or approval of mechanisms to ensure that businesses are allowed to send workers abroad only once a contract has been approved by the authorities. A number of Member States also reported having put in place measures to better secure the rights of workers, including conducting frequent labour inspections, ensuring due payment of wages, prohibiting employers from making deductions from wages for accommodation, and introducing severe ban periods and fines for employers who violate labour requirements.

14. Many States reported on their research and data collection efforts aimed at enhancing analysis of the nature and extent of trafficking in persons.

3. Prosecution and punishment

15. Several Member States reported the development of policies and guidelines on how to investigate and prosecute trafficking in persons, and the regular provision of training to relevant criminal justice officials such as police officers, prosecutors and judges.

16. Several States noted that the establishment of specialized multidisciplinary law enforcement units or specialized prosecutor's offices for countering trafficking in persons as being important measures for effectively investigating trafficking cases. Many Member States also reported having strengthened national cooperation, knowledge-sharing and the sharing of experiences among national agencies by means of seminars and training sessions or by establishing inter-agency working groups, task forces or special advisory councils, or having appointed ambassadors to act against trafficking in persons. Member States also reported having put in place specific mechanisms to identify and respond to children at risk of becoming victims of trafficking, or to quickly detect suspected traffickers.

17. Member States further pointed out the need for zero tolerance of corruption and the importance of taking a strong stand against complicity on the part of public officials in trafficking cases.

18. Member States reported on court cases concerning trafficking in persons, including on the number of convictions. Member States underlined the importance of legally prescribed, adequate sanctions for human traffickers.

19. Member States also reported having exempted victims of trafficking from criminal prosecution for crimes they had been forced to commit as a result of their trafficking experience.

4. Protection of and assistance for trafficking victims

20. The Assembly, in its resolution 70/179, noted the importance of providing protection and assistance to trafficking victims with full respect for their human rights.

21. Many Member States reported on the importance of having national referral mechanisms in place. A number of them highlighted the advantages of establishing national networks of specialized centres to identify, refer and provide services for victims of trafficking, including outreach activities in transit hubs such as airports and port roads. Several Member States reported that government agencies, non-governmental agencies, international organizations and civil society were all part of national systems for the identification of and support to victims of trafficking. Member States also specifically underlined the importance of informing and training health personnel on trafficking in persons, as they are often in a position to be able to refer possible victims to appropriate actors.

22. Many Member States have also developed national protocols or standard operating procedures for victim identification, assistance and protection, including some with a specific focus on children, and noted the importance of addressing the special needs of children. In order to engage civil society, several States have launched grant schemes for non-governmental organizations that work with vulnerable groups and victims of trafficking in persons.

23. Numerous Member States reported having established helplines or hotlines through which victims or people in contact with victims or potential victims of trafficking can access guidance, support and assistance, and some Member States have also launched various kinds of anonymous reporting tools, such as a telephone tip-line or online reporting tool, to warn authorities about potential cases of trafficking.

24. A large number of Member States underlined the importance of having a particular focus on the special vulnerabilities and needs of women and children in combating trafficking in persons and assisting trafficking victims, with some reporting having put in place special mechanisms or procedures for cases involving women and children to better protect their rights.

25. Member States reported on the importance of, and their enhanced efforts to ensure provision of, protection and assistance to trafficking victims. Almost all Member States reported on some aspect of services provided to assist and protect trafficking victims, including medical care, psychological assistance, reflection and recovery periods, employment, education, reintegration and/or resettlement programmes, paying for travel expenses, legal assistance, access to compensation and remedies and accommodation, and most countries reported having a variety of additional services to address the special needs of children.

26. Many Member States reported that third-country nationals who had been identified as trafficking victims would be entitled to a residence permit, with some Member States also providing the possibility of family reunification, and/or residence permits that, under certain conditions, could be continued regardless of cooperation with law enforcement. Member States also reported they allowed third-country nationals who were victims of trafficking, after their identification, to legally work. Several Member States reported having established voluntary and safe return programmes whereby victims of trafficking were ensured a safe return to their home countries.

27. Training activities for various actors, including criminal justice practitioners, immigration officials, border guards, labour inspectors, social workers, non-governmental organizations, journalists, school teachers, health professionals, soldiers before deployment on peacekeeping missions and diplomatic and consular personnel took place in many Member States. The activities focused, among other things, on the identification of potential or actual trafficking victims and how to respond with assistance or support.

28. To address trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal, States have established national coordination networks for donation and transplants and have taken steps to sign regional frameworks to target trafficking in human organs, also including legislative provisions to deter these practices and to protect victims.

5. Partnerships

29. In resolution 70/179, the Assembly urged Member States and other relevant stakeholders to continue to contribute to the full and effective implementation of the Global Plan of Action, including by means of strengthening cooperation and improving coordination.

30. Many Member States reported having actively engaged in partnerships with the private sector, civil society, the media and international organizations. Additionally, States reported on the importance of bilateral cooperation in the fight against trafficking in persons supported by memorandums of understanding between countries.

31. In their responses, Member States emphasized the importance of international cooperation between countries of origin, transit and destination, as well as effective knowledge-sharing in the fight against trafficking in persons.

B. Activities undertaken within the United Nations system and by member agencies of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons

32. The General Assembly, in its resolution 70/179, encouraged UNODC and other relevant agencies of the United Nations system to continue their activities related to the implementation of the Global Plan of Action. For the present report, stakeholders, as well as the member agencies of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons were consulted on their approach to implementing the Global Plan of Action, and the inputs received are presented below.

1. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

33. In its resolution 70/179, the General Assembly emphasized the central role of the work of UNODC in the global fight against trafficking in persons and expressed support for the Office's activities. In particular, and as mandated in the Global Plan of Action, the Office continued to host and manage the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, collect information for the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons* and coordinate the work of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons, in addition to providing normative and technical support to Member States.

34. During the reporting period, UNODC serviced and provided technical, substantive and strategic support to the twenty-third, twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth sessions of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, in May of 2014, 2015 and 2016, respectively; the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime in October 2014; the thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in April 2015; and the sixth session of the Working Group on Trafficking in Persons of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime in November 2015. UNODC also participated in the high-level side event on strengthening cooperation on migration and refugee movements in the perspective of the new development agenda held during the seventieth session of the General Assembly in September 2015. The Office further contributed to the first ever meeting of the Security Council on human trafficking in December 2015, resulting in a presidential statement (S/PRST2015/25). The Security Council mandated a report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the presidential statement, which will be coordinated by the Office.

35. The Office, as specifically encouraged in the Global Plan of Action, also continued to provide technical assistance to Member States, upon request, for the ratification and effective implementation of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol. The relevance of that assistance is underlined by the fact that three targets agreed by

Member States in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development explicitly refer to action in response to trafficking in persons.

36. During the reporting period, UNODC provided technical assistance to Member States through field-led projects across Africa, the Middle East, South, South-East and Central Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America. In addition, the Office reached 70 countries through tailored technical assistance activities offered by its Global Programme against Trafficking in Persons. Targeted capacity-building assistance at the national level was provided to 27 countries, while 7 Member States were supported in the review and amendment of national legislation to counter trafficking in persons. More than 1,400 criminal justice practitioners and relevant stakeholders received specialized training and briefings through more than 60 technical assistance activities organized or substantively supported by the Global Programme. They included a series of training workshops on combating human trafficking for magistrates and law enforcement officials in Algeria, the roll-out of train-the-trainers initiatives in the Congo, Morocco and Panama and a series of regional trainings for representatives of judicial training institutions in South-Eastern Europe. The Office further supported Albania and the Congo in developing national action plans to strengthen and facilitate national coordination for combating trafficking in persons.

37. In January 2016, UNODC launched the new four-year Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants, implemented in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). From an initial series of needs assessment exercises, the Global Action will assist 13 partner countries in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America, as well as fostering broader international cooperation.

38. The Office further developed practical tools and publications to support Member States' efforts to fight trafficking in persons. The Office, in close consultation with Member States, continued its work on a series of issue papers exploring key concepts of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol. The Office published the issue paper entitled *The Role of "Consent" in the Trafficking in Persons Protocol* in October 2014 and the issue paper entitled *The Concept of "Exploitation" in the Trafficking in Persons Protocol* in April 2015. In April 2015, the Office also launched an assessment toolkit entitled *Trafficking in Persons for the Purpose of Organ Removal*. In June 2015, the Office launched a report entitled *The Role of Recruitment Fees and Abusive and Fraudulent Recruitment Practices of Recruitment Agencies in Trafficking in Persons*.[1] The Office also further expanded the Human Trafficking Case Law Database which, as of 30 May 2016, included 1,311 cases from 94 jurisdictions. A case digest on evidentiary issues drawing from those cases is currently being finalized and will be published in 2016.

39. UNODC continued to work closely with other international and regional organizations, relevant national governmental institutions and civil society organizations. Accordingly, UNODC cooperated closely with the relevant regional mechanisms and organizations that address trafficking in persons, including the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of

[1] All of these tools are available in various official languages of the United Nations at www.unodc.org.

Europe, the League of Arab States and the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime. In 2015, UNODC and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) signed a cooperation agreement to address organized crime, including trafficking in persons and the smuggling of migrants. A total of 137 non-governmental organizations worldwide cooperated with UNODC in 2014 and 2015 on more than 100 specific responses to trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling, mostly in relation to technical assistance work, and other activities beyond direct assistance to victims of trafficking, including all types of victim-focused work, capacity-building activities and legislative assistance, as well as providing valued inputs to consultative processes to ensure robust normative and policy work.

40. As guardian of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, UNODC has provided significant input to the preparation and organization of a high-level meeting of the General Assembly on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants, to be convened on 19 September 2016, which it is hoped will address and reinvigorate the response to trafficking in persons.

2. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

41. Promoting the human rights-based approach to addressing trafficking in persons is at the core of the work of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on trafficking. To that end, OHCHR continues to provide technical assistance and capacity-development, as requested by the Human Rights Council, to Member States and civil society groups on the application of a rights-based approach to combating trafficking in persons. To that end, OHCHR assisted Australia, Belarus, Cambodia, Mauritania and the Republic of Korea.

42. OHCHR continues to engage with OSCE through membership in the OSCE Alliance against Trafficking in Persons, through which member entities jointly address trafficking issues such as the non-criminalization of victims of trafficking for status-related offences.

43. A joint event on recruitment agencies and their role in the trafficking cycle was organized during the twenty-ninth session of the Human Rights Council in cooperation with UNODC and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

44. Currently, OHCHR is finalizing a study on trafficking in persons for the removal of organs, an issue that has not been thoroughly addressed by the human rights mechanisms. The study will form the basis of a human rights response to address that type of trafficking. An event on trafficking in persons for the removal of organs was convened during the thirty-first session of the Human Rights Council, in partnership with Belarus as the coordinator of the Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking, with the participation of UNODC, the World Health Organization and OSCE.

3. Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

45. Asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless persons are often compelled to seek the help of smugglers for dangerous and irregular journeys in their search for protection, thus increasing their vulnerability to being trafficked. In line with its protection mandate, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for

Refugees (UNHCR) works to protect persons of concern from human trafficking through the use of multifaceted operational approaches. Activities to address human trafficking are undertaken in close partnership with States, local non-governmental organizations and intergovernmental organizations, including in the development of national and regional strategies that address human trafficking as part of broader approaches to migration management.[2]

46. Legal and psychosocial counselling, safe shelter, emergency assistance and solutions continue to be provided to victims of trafficking under the UNHCR 2012 strategy and regional plan of action to address smuggling and trafficking in persons in East Africa and the Horn of Africa.[3] After reports that stateless persons were left stranded in the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea, that mass graves were found in the region, and that traffickers were targeting individuals upon disembarkation, UNHCR put forward the proposals for action in the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea by stakeholders in that region in order to provide immediate protection responses and solutions to address these hazardous journeys.[4]

47. UNHCR trafficking prevention activities include raising awareness about the risks of dangerous irregular movement. The e-platform "Telling the real story", launched in 2016, uses video testimonials to provide information on the dangers faced in travelling to Europe over the Mediterranean sea.[5] In 2015, UNHCR saw a significant reduction in the trafficking of registered, unaccompanied Eritrean children from Ethiopia and the Sudan, coinciding with the third year of implementation of the regional child protection project "Live, learn and play safe".[6] In 2015, UNHCR launched a report entitled *Women on the Run: First-hand Accounts of Refugees fleeing El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico* to encourage evidence-based protection responses to risky regional movements, which followed the publication by UNHCR in 2014 of a similar report entitled *Children on the Run: Unaccompanied Children leaving Central America and Mexico and the Need for International Protection*, documenting the experiences of women and children moving through Central America.

48. UNHCR continues to actively engage in global and regional consultative processes (such as the Khartoum, Bali, Budapest, Puebla and Rabat processes) that place countering trafficking in persons high on their agenda. UNHCR has collaborated with the European Union and the African Union in the development of the Valetta Summit on Migration Action Plan, which includes priority action to combat trafficking in persons while ensuring the protection of asylum-seekers and refugees. UNHCR chaired the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons in 2015 and encouraged an outreach-oriented and regional approach for the Coordination Group.

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[2] UNHCR, "Refugee protection and mixed migration: a 10-point plan of action" (Geneva, 2007). Available at www.unhcr.org.

[3] UNHCR, "Smuggling and trafficking from the East and Horn of Africa: executive summary" (March 2013). Available at www.refworld.org.

[4] UNHCR, "Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea: proposals for action" (May 2015). Available at www.unhcr.org.

[5] Available at www.tellingtherealstory.org.

[6] UNHCR child protection regional initiative, "Live, learn and play safe 2014-2016: protecting children at risk in Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan and Yemen". Midway project report, January 2014-June 2015 (2015). Available at www.refworld.org.

4. International Criminal Police Organization

49. The role of INTERPOL is to enable police in its 190 member States to work together to make the world a safer place.

50. A team dedicated to protecting vulnerable communities is based at the INTERPOL General Secretariat in Lyon, France, with a specialized officer in six regional offices, in Argentina, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, El Salvador, Kenya and Zimbabwe. The INTERPOL Vulnerable Communities Subdirectorate focuses on trafficking in human beings, people smuggling and crimes against children, with activities focused on prevention, protection, prosecution and partnerships.

51. INTERPOL supports national police in tactical deployments to dismantle the criminal networks behind trafficking in human beings. Operations are preceded by training workshops to ensure that officers are equipped with the necessary skills, including specialist interview techniques, while partnerships with local social services, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations ensure that victims receive appropriate support.

52. Between 2009 and 2015, operational activities delivered the following results: 1,066 law enforcement officials were trained in West Africa; 197 suspects were arrested in West Africa; 984 child victims were rescued in West Africa; 357 victims were rescued in Latin America; 197 suspects were arrested in Latin America; 950 victims were rescued in Central America; 140 victims were rescued in Central Africa; and 40 suspected traffickers were arrested in Central Africa.

53. INTERPOL provides member countries with a range of tools and services to help counter trafficking in human beings: (a) notices and "diffusions" (which are less formal than notices) enable global cooperation in tracking criminals and suspects, locating missing persons or collecting information; (b) relevant databases include records on nominal data, stolen and lost travel documents, fraudulent documents, fingerprints, DNA profiles and child sexual exploitation images; and (c) technical solutions enable frontline law enforcement agencies to access certain databases at border points via the INTERPOL I-24/7 secure global police communications system.

54. The INTERPOL human trafficking task force meets on an annual basis to raise awareness of emerging issues, promote prevention programmes and initiate specialized training. A global conference on trafficking in persons gathers representatives from law enforcement agencies, the public and private sectors and non-governmental and international organizations to encourage cross-sector cooperation. The fourth such conference will take place in October 2016.

5. United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute

55. The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) is currently launching the project entitled "Promoting a comprehensive coordination mechanism to deal with migratory flows within North Africa and counter organized crime in human trafficking/smuggling of migrants". The project is intended to pave the way for the establishment of a strategic approach for regional and national rapid response mechanisms to tackle the challenges posed by irregular migration, trafficking in human beings and the smuggling of migrants within North Africa.

56. The project is the initial component of a broader programme aimed at enhancing regional and national rapid response mechanisms to tackle the challenges posed by irregular migration, human trafficking and smuggling of migrants within North Africa.

57. The project is aimed at supporting the development and implementation of the programme by strengthening the coordination of existing initiatives and cooperation among key stakeholders in North African countries at both the national level and the regional level.

58. The aim of the broader programme is to establish a coordination mechanism to better address the challenges posed by irregular migration, human trafficking and smuggling of migrants within North Africa. A comprehensive report to map existing and prospective initiatives in the region will be produced, and a network of relevant international stakeholders to facilitate the development of that broader programme will be created.

C. Towards full implementation: appraisal and the way forward

Appraisal of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons

59. On 30 July 2010, a decade after the adoption of the Trafficking in Persons Protocol the General Assembly, in its resolution 64/293, adopted the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons as a renewed commitment by Member States to combating trafficking in persons globally and to reinforcing the obligations accepted by Member States under legally binding international instruments, including the Protocol.

60. The Global Plan of Action gave new impetus to the efforts of the international community to end trafficking in persons. Governments resolved to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, protect and assist victims, prosecute related crimes and strengthen partnerships among governmental institutions, intergovernmental organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector, including the media. Among the significant achievements of the Global Plan of Action was the establishment of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, as well as the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*.

61. The Global Plan of Action called for an appraisal of progress made in its implementation in 2013. This first appraisal took the form of a high-level meeting of the General Assembly on 13 and 14 May 2013. Eighty-eight Member States and three observers made statements during the plenary meetings. As explicitly noted in resolution 68/192, the high-level meeting evinced strong political will to step up efforts against trafficking in persons. Building on the experience of that first appraisal, the General Assembly, in that resolution, decided to appraise progress under the Global Plan of Action again, from within existing resources, on a four-year basis, starting at the Assembly's seventy-second session. As mandated by resolution 70/179, the next appraisal is expected to take place in October 2017, at the seventy-second session of the Assembly.

IV. Activities of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons

62. The Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons was mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 61/180 to enhance cooperation and coordination and facilitate a holistic and comprehensive approach by the international community to the problem of trafficking in persons. The Group is comprised of 17 agencies and bodies of the United Nations system, as well as other relevant intergovernmental organizations. During the reporting period, OSCE and the Inter-Agency Coordination Group became more closely affiliated, as OSCE became the first regional organization to form an official partnership with the Coordination Group.

63. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/180, UNODC has been designated to coordinate the activities of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group. The Group held its first meeting in 2006 pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/27. An annually rotating chairmanship was introduced in 2011 and formalized through the adoption of the terms of reference in 2013. As of 1 January 2016, owing to a lack of dedicated funding, actively participating agencies have agreed to prioritize the use of the Coordination Group as a joint policy-producing mechanism.

64. During the reporting period, the chairmanship was held by IOM in 2014, UNHCR in 2015 and UNODC in 2016.

65. The activities of the Coordination Group in the reporting period have been guided by an annual work plan elaborated jointly by six of its member entities. The six entities that together undertake the Coordination Group's work programme and form its decision-making body, referred to as the "working group", are ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNHCR, UNICEF and UNODC.

66. Regular virtual meetings of the Coordination Group's working group were held, with several in-person meetings organized in Geneva, Vienna and New York, throughout the reporting period to exchange information and coordinate on matters of policy.

67. In January 2015, the six agencies comprising the working group hosted a consultative briefing for permanent missions at United Nations headquarters in New York on the Coordination Group's work and priorities in 2015 and beyond. At the consultative briefing, the group shared its intention of holding such events on a regular basis in future.

68. During the reporting period, the Coordination Group made progress in the work of developing and publishing a series of policy papers that the Group initiated in 2012, each policy paper examining one key issue that has been identified by the members of the Group as a critical challenge for the international community to address in the fight against trafficking in persons in the next decade.

69. To date, two Coordination Group policy papers have been published: "The international legal framework concerning trafficking in persons" (2012), and "Preventing trafficking in persons by addressing demand" (2014). Two additional papers will be published in the course of 2016, during the chairmanship of UNODC, entitled "Providing effective remedies for victims of trafficking in persons" and

"Outlining a shared approach among United Nations agencies in monitoring and evaluating counter-trafficking responses".

70. In line with its anti-trafficking coordination role, the Coordination Group has also made continuous efforts to engage with other relevant stakeholders, including States and civil society organizations, through public events, the release of joint statements and the marking of relevant commemorative dates on issues related to trafficking in persons. In order to promote the Group's visibility, actions undertaken include the development of a website of the Coordination Group to provide easily accessible information to a wider public on the work of the Coordination Group and its member agencies and to more effectively disseminate the Group's products. The website will be fully operational in mid-2016 and will be used as the Group's platform for awareness and advocacy activities.

71. Furthermore, the World Day against Trafficking in Persons on 30 July 2015 was marked with an advocacy video prepared by the member agencies of the Coordination Group, in which the principals of eight of the world's key organizations working to tackle trafficking in persons came together to issue a statement urging that more be done to help those who fall victim to this crime. In 2016, the Coordination Group intends to draw attention to the issue of vulnerability and the factors that increase people's vulnerability to trafficking in persons, including in the context of large movements, when people are forced into mass migration due to conflict, natural disasters and other push factors.

V. The UNODC *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*: update on research and trend analysis

72. As requested in the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, in November 2014 UNODC published the second and latest edition of the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*. It included data on trafficking in persons from 128 countries and provided an overview of patterns and flows of trafficking in persons at the global, regional and national levels, based on trafficking cases detected between 2010 and 2012. The *Report* was very well received by governmental authorities, academia and the anti-trafficking community in general. One year after its publication, the publication had been downloaded from the UNODC website 100,000 times. The *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2014* also highlighted the role of organized crime in trafficking in persons, and included an analytical chapter on how traffickers operate.

73. The *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2014* confirmed that trafficking in persons is a truly global phenomenon: between 2010 and 2012, victims from at least 153 countries were detected in 124 countries worldwide. A great majority of the victims detected were female, although men and boys were also trafficked in significant numbers. Women and girls were trafficked not only for sexual exploitation but also for forced labour and for other purposes. The percentage of children among victims was seen to be increasing, with children comprising nearly one third of all detected trafficking victims in the world.

74. Many countries have recently adopted legislation criminalizing trafficking in persons as a specific offence. However, definitions of human trafficking vary, as does the capacity to identify offenders and victims. The *Global Report on*

Trafficking in Persons 2014 found that the overall criminal justice response to trafficking in persons, which has historically been very weak, has not improved.

75. The next edition of the *Global Report*, to be published in late 2016, will build on the solid foundation of previous editions. As requested by Member States, the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2016* will provide a global overview of patterns and flows of trafficking in persons. It will present the trends covering over 10 years of data collected by UNODC on trafficking in persons (2003-2014). In addition, the report will include detailed regional information, as well as country information sheets.

76. Furthermore, the *Report* of 2016 will contain an analysis of the relationship between trafficking in persons and migration. To that end, it will contain a study of whether certain forms of migration are particularly vulnerable or resilient to trafficking in persons and identify the factors behind these patterns. Trafficking in persons flows will be compared with those of regular migration. Similarly, comparative analyses of irregular migration flows and human trafficking flows will be presented. The aim of those analyses will be to assess how much the two phenomena are connected. Also, concepts related to trafficking, smuggling, irregular migration, refugees and other similar issues will be clarified. The similarities and differences of trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants will be discussed.

77. The *Report* will not provide comparisons or rankings among countries. It will be based on authoritative information gathered from national and international institutions.

78. Regarding the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UNODC has pilot-tested research methodologies which would supplement the existing data reported in the *Global Report* so as to better support Member States in measuring their progress on the three targets of the Sustainable Development Goals that explicitly refer to trafficking in persons.

VI. Developments related to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children

79. UNODC continues to manage the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children,[7] established by the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons. The Trust Fund's mandate emphasizes direct victim assistance, in particular to women and children. Nearly all Trust Fund grants currently provided to non-governmental organizations focus on specialized assistance to female victims of sexual exploitation, and more than half of the projects focus exclusively on child victims. Two global calls for funding proposals were issued, in 2011 and 2014, to identify specialized projects to provide direct assistance to victims of trafficking. As of May 2016, the Trust Fund had supported 30 projects by non-governmental organizations in 26 countries around the world, with paid and committed grants worth totalling $1.75 million. Projects have directly assisted approximately 2,000

[7] Additional information on the Trust Fund is available at www.unodc.org/humantraffickingfund.

trafficking victims every year with services such as basic shelter, psychosocial support, legal counselling and representation in court, education and vocational training, primary health care and small stipends.

80. Additional delivery in the form of new grants to specific non-governmental organization projects could start in 2016/17 if more donor contributions are received, given that 50 eligible projects have been placed on a reserve list to be used if additional contributions are received by December 2016. Member States and other stakeholders are invited to review the achievements of Trust Fund-supported projects as set out in various publications available on the UNODC website, and are encouraged to provide regular contributions to the Fund, which requires an annual $1 million to remain effective and operational.

81. Since its establishment in 2010, the Trust Fund has received $2.3 million in paid contributions, with an annual average of $400,000. Nineteen Member States and over 30 private sector donors have provided funding, with the latter contributions accounting for almost one third of the funds received. In 2015, the Trust Fund received $357,701. In 2015, several high-level briefings for Member States were held, calling for additional funding, including side events at the Thirteenth Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice held in Doha in 2015, and the session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Vienna, a special high-level event held at United Nations Headquarters organized by the Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking, as well as in the margins of the meeting of the Working Group on Trafficking in Persons of the Conference of the Parties to the Organized Crime Convention in November 2015. Notwithstanding that, the overall level of contributions received is significantly below the levels required to provide assistance with a significant impact as was intended when the Fund was established. Currently, the Trust Fund has a balance of $90,000 available for new grants. A minimum of $500,000 is needed in order to allow the issuance of a new call for proposals after the end of the current three-year cycle in 2017.

82. The board of trustees will conclude their three-year appointment in December 2016. The current chair of the board is Benita Ferrero-Waldner (Austria). Other members include Saisuree Chutikul (Thailand), Joy Ngozi Ezeilo (Nigeria), Ketevan Khutsishvili (Georgia) and Virna Luque Ferro (Panama). A call for Member States to nominate a new board of trustees will be conducted during the third quarter of 2016.

VII. Raising awareness: activities to mark the World Day against Trafficking in Persons on 30 July

83. In its resolution 68/192, the General Assembly decided, in the context of the need for raising awareness of the situation of trafficking victims and for the promotion and protection of their rights, to designate 30 July as the World Day against Trafficking in Persons, to be observed every year beginning in 2014. In its resolution 70/179, the Assembly welcomed the events held by Member States, United Nations agencies, other international organizations and civil society marking the World Day against Trafficking in Persons and invited all stakeholders to continue to observe the World Day in order to raise awareness.

84. In 2014 and 2015, UNODC led awareness-raising efforts to mark the first and second annual World Day against Trafficking in Persons, on 30 July. Aided by a multi-year UNODC social media campaign entitled "#igivehope", the campaign encouraged people worldwide to express their solidarity with the victims of human trafficking. A thunderclap — a coordinated message launched collectively across Twitter, Facebook and Tumblr on 30 July — was sent out both years, ultimately reaching an average of 5.6 million people per year. Given the location of UNODC headquarters in Vienna, outreach activities were held on the World Day against Trafficking in Persons in 2014 and 2015 at the Vienna City Hall. Messages and public service announcements were shown during the annual film festival, and information stands were established to provide the public with information on trafficking in persons. Both years, UNODC field offices worldwide coordinated a series of national events in conjunction with Governments, civil society and other United Nations entities. This included public outreach activities such as illuminating iconic landmarks in blue (the colour associated with the well-established Blue Heart Campaign against Human Trafficking, noted below), the establishment of new national data collections in order to better tackle trafficking, the holding of high-level events so that the voices of victims could be heard; and the conducting of media outreach campaigns.

85. With the inaugural World Day against Trafficking in Persons in 2014, media organizations, such as USA Network, rallied support from among their community of television actors to promote the messages. Other celebrities supported the online campaign. The United Nations Messengers of Peace and UNODC Goodwill Ambassadors also participated.

86. In 2015, in partnership with the Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking, OHCHR marked the World Day against Trafficking in Persons by organizing an event in Minsk to raise awareness of human trafficking. The event was attended by representatives of the 23 Member States belonging to the Group of Friends.

87. Additionally, in 2015, a joint video message of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group, featuring heads of agencies and principals of UNODC, IOM, ILO, UNHCR, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), OHCHR and INTERPOL, was produced as an advocacy tool to raise awareness of human trafficking and promote cooperation in the fight against human trafficking.

88. In addition to the World Day outreach activities, UNODC coordinates the Blue Heart Campaign against Human Trafficking, a global outreach initiative established in 2010 which has so far been adopted by 12 countries and seeks to encourage involvement and inspire action to combat this crime. In 2014, Peru became the latest country to join the Blue Heart Campaign, while in Colombia it was adopted as part of one of the country's most traditional festivals, the Carnival of Barranquilla, to help raise awareness about trafficking in persons.

89. In addition to being adopted as part of States' national awareness strategies, the Blue Heart Campaign is open to all those who want to participate and show their support for action against human trafficking. The Blue Heart Campaign itself was chosen to represent the sadness of those who are trafficked while offering a reminder of the cold-heartedness of those who buy and sell fellow human beings.

The use of the blue United Nations colour demonstrates the commitment of the United Nations to combating this crime against human dignity. Just as the red ribbon has become the international symbol of HIV and AIDS awareness, this campaign aims to similarly promote awareness through an international symbol against human trafficking.

90. Finally, UNODC works with a series of goodwill ambassadors at both the national and global levels to raise awareness around trafficking in persons and the Blue Heart Campaign. Mira Sorvino (United States, actress), Ozark Henry (Belgium, singer and performing artist) and Ali Rahimi (Austria, businessperson and philanthropist) are all regularly involved with UNODC headquarters and field offices at events and with the media.

VIII. Situation of the resources of the United Nations system related to combating trafficking in persons, in particular of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

91. As clearly emphasized by Member States in General Assembly resolution 70/179, UNODC plays a central role in the global fight against trafficking in persons, particularly in providing technical assistance to Member States, to implement the Organized Crime Convention and its Protocols. The Office contributes to policy development and provides normative and technical assistance to Member States upon their request, such as legislative assistance and capacity-building with a focus on the criminal justice perspective. The General Assembly further mandated the Office to manage the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, to prepare biennial reports on patterns and flows of trafficking in persons, and to coordinate the activities of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons.

92. To fulfil its mandates on trafficking in persons, UNODC relies primarily on extrabudgetary resources from Member States and other donors, with only two dedicated regular budget positions being available for its work on trafficking in persons overall: one in its Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling Section and one in the Global Report on Trafficking in Persons Unit.

93. The resources available for the work of UNODC on trafficking in persons, in particular for its normative and policy work, continue to be limited. This severely impacts on the Office's capacity to provide support to policy development, as well as to support intergovernmental and inter-agency processes to complement the legal and other technical assistance requested by Member States. In the light of a growing demand by Member States for technical assistance on trafficking in persons and the corresponding need for increased policy guidance and enhanced cooperation and coordination with other stakeholders, additional resources are necessary to allow the Office to adequately respond to Member States' assistance needs at national, regional and international levels. In particular, the capacity of the Office to undertake additional tasks is entirely dependent on the availability of adequate resources.

94. UNODC continues to seek extrabudgetary resources to carry out its work on trafficking in persons. In resolution 70/179, the General Assembly invited Member States and other international and bilateral donors to provide voluntary contributions to the Office for the purpose of providing assistance to Member States upon request.

95. During the reporting period, the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons greatly benefited from a voluntary contribution from the Government of Sweden that allowed it to maintain a dedicated secretariat, hold regular in-person meetings of representatives of all six working group member agencies and undertake relevant policy research and analysis. This greatly enhanced the Group's effectiveness as an inter-agency coordination and policy-setting mechanism. Without renewed funding, Member States and other donors are, in line with resolution 70/179, encouraged to consider making voluntary contributions to support the Coordination Group.

96. Given the importance of the fight against trafficking in persons, Member States are encouraged to increase their voluntary contributions to support the United Nations system's work on trafficking in persons.

IX. Recommendations

97. **It is recommended that the General Assembly consider taking the following actions:**

(a) Call upon Member States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to Prevent, Supress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children;

(b) Call upon Member States to implement the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to Prevent, Supress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children by effectively criminalizing trafficking in persons, providing victim protection and assistance and strengthening international cooperation;

(c) Call upon Member States to strengthen prevention efforts, including by addressing factors that create vulnerabilities to trafficking in persons, raising awareness and marking the annual World Day against Trafficking in Persons on 30 July;

(d) Invite Member States to provide adequate voluntary resources for the work of the United Nations system agencies on trafficking in persons, including in particular the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons;

(e) Encourage Member States and private donors to give financial contributions to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children;

(f) Encourage Member States to support the biennial publication of the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons* by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.